

A tradition of training

by Nancy Mitchell

May 15 marked the renewal of a tradition in the Sierra Nevada Region. For the first time since 1997, liveline training in Redding brought together SNR, Desert Southwest and Rocky Mountain linemen for a hotstick and barehand procedures refresher course.

The course provides an opportunity for crews to hone their skills working on and near energized power lines. According to Trainer **Scott Hicks**, "We were lucky to have a large turnout for our school this year. It is always good to get together and share ideas. Everyone benefits."


Hicks and the Redding line crew hosted 16 participants from Elverta, Phoenix, Gering and Loveland. Though met with rain early in the week, "Once the skies cleared, we were able to get right into the procedures from our 'Barehand Maintenance Manual,' " Hicks said.

According to Redding Line Crew Foreman **Ross McFate**, when SN began its liveline training program in 1981, it was difficult to deenergize certain transmission lines for maintenance. SN decided to perform maintenance under liveline conditions. SN wrote procedures to train and certify crews to perform liveline maintenance on 230-kV lines and covered-tower and bucket-rescue procedures.

When SN assumed maintenance responsibility of the California-Oregon Transmission Project in 1992, SN developed hotstick procedures for the 500-kV system and realized the need to perform liveline, barehand maintenance for that system as well. With the approval of California Occupational Safety and Health Administration, SN Lineman **Ralph Armstrong** developed a training manual for each activity. In July 1997, crews were trained and certified to perform barehand maintenance on 500-kV lines.

The ability to perform liveline maintenance eliminates the need to deenergize lines. According to SN Project Manager **Ed Chang**, "By keeping lines available for transmission, rather than having to obtain power from an alternative source, Western is able to continue to provide cost savings to its customers. In addition, options for meeting loads are enhanced."

Although liveline work is performed throughout the year, the SN annual refresher training was cancelled for three years due to a heavy workload.

Dave Horton from Redding commented, "Our schools are a great way to stay sharp and share our techniques with others. It was worth every minute." 



Liveline training participants **Dave Horton**, **Robert Flores** and **Ralph Armstrong** prepare to complete an insulator change-out on the energized Captain Jack-Olinda 500-kV line. (photo by **Scott Hicks**)

Liveline training participants

Redding, CA

Ralph Armstrong
Dave Floyd
Scott Hicks
Dave Horton
Daren New
Will Schnyer
Elverta, CA
Brian Adams

Geof Buchholz
Joel Carrillo
Robert Flores
James Hill
Ryan Yeager

Phoenix, AZ

Dick Bullock
Lynn Landholm
Lionel Martinez

Rick Mattox
Todd Murray

Loveland, CO

Todd Cupp
Tom Hamblin

Gering, NE

Bob Keigher
Jim Marlin